

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Road Widening Program in Toishan/Travel Permits
and Restrictions/Mail Censorship

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NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

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SOURCE

1. Chinese authorities were contemplating a program which involved widening roads and highways in the Toishan District by expanding the present widths of the roads four feet on each side so that they would be sufficiently wide for two lane travel. The work is but part of a general road building program which exists throughout the Toishan area so that better transportation can be facilitated. Work on this road program is by means of forced labor which utilizes the local population. Those people who live in the vicinity of the road work to be done are forced to work at no pay from 9 am to 5 pm daily until the project in their locality is completed. As of July 1953 surveys had already been made on some roads, including that between Sun-chong and Kung Yick, as well as a lesser road from Tung Kong village to Sunchong. These roads were then to be surfaced with dirt and sand.
2. On my departure from the Toishan District I traveled from Sun-chong to Canton by water via rivers and canals. The boat I traveled on was a small steamer that used wood as fuel and which towed a barge loaded with farm cargo. The trip took 16 hours and the fare amounted to 48 thousand yuan, approximately \$12 Hong Kong currency. From Canton I traveled by train to the Hong Kong border where passengers disembarked at the village of Shumshum. The fare from Canton to Shumshum amounted to 43 thousand yuan.
3. No special permits are required for travel within China. However, for one to travel outside of China, as was my case, I had to secure a special permit which was good for but one-way travel and which allowed me 21 days travel time in which to leave China. The permit issued to me contained identification characteristics and a photograph; when I crossed the frontier at Shumshum I had to display it to both Communist and British officials. To secure this permit I first made application to

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our district headquarters in the Toishan District. Upon payment of a one thousand yuan application fee a receipt was issued and a form was given me for completion. After this form was completed I then had to go through four different steps before a permit was granted. These steps were:

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- a. The application was presented to our local village chief for his approval;
- b. The application was sent to the head of our agricultural cooperative.
- c. The application was presented to the district head (from whom the original form was obtained).
- d. The application was finally submitted to the district security office at Toishan.

All officials in the above steps had to approve the application. If the application was denied at any point that was the end of it. Since my application indicated that I was asking for permission to leave China to go overseas I had to present evidence in the form of correspondence that my ultimate destination was overseas and my permit when granted carried a notation that I would not be permitted to return to China.

4. Other than the overseas travel permit there were no documents required of travelers except as indicated later. If one is absent from his home community for more than 24 hours he must report to the nearest "Chamber of Commerce and Labor" each night. The "Chamber of Commerce and Labor" is an office set up in each market place, which is often separate and distinct from a residential village.
5. The people who resided in my own village were segregated into different classes. Those people who possessed land or were otherwise well-off financially were required to report every night to the head man or village chief. These people were under constant surveillance and their travel was very much restricted. Regardless of any travel they might undertake, whether local or for a considerable distance, people in this class were required to have a permit. Included among this class of people were those individuals listed as "special cases" who might have violated the spirit of communism by harboring non-Communist thoughts.
6. I was classified as an overseas Chinese laborer due to the fact that [REDACTED] was classified as a laborer. The only difficulty I encountered [REDACTED] occurred about three years ago (1951). At that time I had a revolver at my home contrary to regulations which required all guns to be reported by a certain date. I had forgotten to report this weapon and its presence was reported to the authorities by a neighbor. As a result I was found guilty of possession of an unregistered firearm and was fined 14 hundred pounds of rice, the equivalent to one million four hundred thousand yuan, and was given a seven days time limit in which to raise this amount.

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7. Slightly over one year (spring 1953) ago Communist government authorities at Canton sent deputation teams to all villages in the Toishan District with instructions to indoctrinate the rural residents into communism. At the time they visited my village they urged its people to write letters to their overseas kinfolk, regardless of the country the latter resided in, requesting them to remit money. I do not know how effective this program was or if any one received money from abroad as no one talked about receiving any funds.
8. Censorship of mail is an established fact. Chinese who are listed as Class One, Two or Three must take their letters, unsealed, to their village chief and leave them with him. The chief then censors these letters before he seals and mails them. If anyone were to be caught violating this censorship he would be subject to violent treatment, including the possibility of execution. Class One is composed of those individuals who, prior to Communist control of their areas, had the right to exercise authority in their villages or who, since Communist control, had stirred up minor troubles. Class Two includes persons who were minor politicians or who were in the military prior to Communist control. Class Three includes the wealthy class, usually landowners. Relatives of overseas Chinese laborers who were not otherwise included in one of these three classes were not required to submit correspondence for censorship and they could mail letters sealed. However it is an open question as to whether these letters were later censored or not.

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761.125	981L
756.191	981L
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